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3 December 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, PRD

SUBJECT: Product Review II: The November Test Period

1. Current intelligence publications (NID, NIB, and DIN) contained over 80 articles during November on subjects concerning Latin America*. In general, November's review placed in sharp relief the fuzzy outlines of conclusions drawn during October.

2. Much Washington current intelligence on Latin America is not likely to be of use to policy makers such as those who receive the NID. About one tenth of the articles published during November, for example, were fillers. A case in point is an item, published in the NID and NIB on 11 November, that reported the departure -- without explanation -- of two Soviet Guided Missile Cruisers from the Cuban port of Cienfuegos. Furthermore, another forty percent or so of total current intelligence coverage was probably marginally useful, because it relayed fragmentary facts with little analysis, and often dealt with subjects primarily of interest to intelligence officers, not policy makers. Fourteen of twenty articles on Argentina, for example, concentrated on that country's security problem -- terrorist activities, government counter-terrorist moves, and intra-government conflict over those moves. Events were reported as they occurred and articles seemed almost breathless, certainly not contemplative. If a policy maker were so disposed, and he probably was not, he could have pieced together a general outline of the security/political situation in Argentina from the bits and pieces provided by intelligence. But a meaningful whole was not provided by the community in the current publications.

3. Another problem, perhaps related, was lack of continuity. Many articles were reports of isolated events -- a schism between advisors to the Brazilian president, Ecuador's purchase of British jet fighters, Argentine overcommitment on wheat exports -- with no effort to explain significance. In the case of coverage on the OAS Foreign Minister's meeting held in Ecuador, discontinuity may have resulted in wisdom lost on the issue of whether the 1964 sanctions against Cuba would be lifted. On 5 November, the NIB and NID reported that several small countries were confused by U.S. silence on the issue and might not vote for the resolution to lift the

*DIN's published after 27 November had not been received at the writing of this memorandum.

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sanctions. The articles stated that anything less than a clear-cut -- two-thirds -- vote in favor of the majority's desire to remove the sanctions would be damaging to U.S. interests in the region; they implied that the U.S. might avoid this danger by somehow signalling the waverers to vote with the majority. Despite this accurate assessment, the NID and DIN published articles on 7 November -- one day before the conference would open in Quito -- that downplayed these previously reported negative indicators and predicted that the required vote would be reached to rescind the sanctions. One cannot be sure but gets the impression that these later items might have helped to persuade Washington level policy makers to instruct U.S. representatives to remain silent. One thing is certain, U.S. silence had the predicted effect; the resolution missed the required two-thirds by two votes.

4. There were more KIO related articles on Latin America in November than in October -- 25 percent had some relationship -- principally because of coverage on the OAS meeting. [redacted] Latin policies and attitudes in regional forums, amongst others, which bear on issues of importance to the U.S.) In general, however, the relationship did not seem conscious. Rather one gets the impression that coverage would have been about the same without the KIQs.

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5. Current intelligence on Latin America also suffered from over-coverage of several events. All three dailies covered the abortive, little rebellion against the Banzer regime in Bolivia. Separate -- but equal -- articles in each described Banzer leading the armor charge against the rebels in the southern town of Santa Cruz, predicted that the Bolivian strong-man would use the incident to put off elections, and announced his decision to do so. Moves and counter-moves made by Peru's President Velasco and his detractors were covered in a similar way.

6. Another kind of redundancy was also revealed by this month's review. All but one of the 23 NIB articles appeared virtually verbatim in the NID, on the same day or one day later. Conversely, there were several insightful (and not too highly classified) articles which were published in the NID only and which would have most likely been of use to a NIB audience. One, for example, was a succinct piece on the status of the Panama Canal negotiations (NID, 9 November). The article outlined what had been agreed upon and those issues still outstanding, and it predicted a successful completion of a treaty package by 1975. This [redacted] related item would have been of interest to staffers not on NID distribution in State and the JCS.

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7. Taken in sum, NID coverage seems superior. In ratio to the NIB and the DIN's, it had more items in the "worth reporting" and "major value" categories. There was more analysis, more taking stock, in the NID than in the other two dailies. The DIN's, on the other hand, remain at the bottom, in quality if not in quantity. Fourteen of 20 total DIN's read were of marginal utility. Seventeen of 20 were on political subjects, and several of these simply made no sense; others were shallow. On the rare occasion when DIA focussed on a military subject its article was clear and succinct and its analysis insightful. An item on the Chilean leadership's perceptions of Peru's military capabilities and intentions made its contribution at a

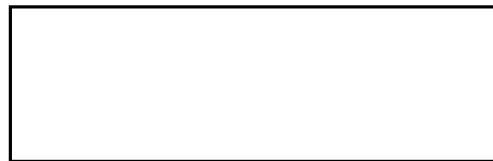
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time (mid November) when policy makers were thinking about the border controversy.

8. The summary chart (attached) revised last month, was useful. In conjunction with substantive review made on a daily basis, it can highlight trends in intelligence and point to specific means for improving coverage. Many of the same pitfalls noted in the above summary on Latin America were also revealed in a review of current intelligence on Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey. The second attached summary chart also displays the NIB/NID redundancy, the political orientation of DIN's and their marginal utility, and the NID's superior coverage. At first glance, the KIQ relationship column might suggest more focus by analysts working this problem than those responsible for intelligence on Latin America. The large number of articles peripherally associated with the KIQ is deceiving, however, since [redacted] is worded in such a general way that nearly any topic on Cyprus, Greece, or Turkey could conceivably be associated with it.

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Attachments - As Stated

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